

Act 161 Implementation Report

January 15, 2006



**Safe & Healthy Schools
(802) 828-0570**

This report is pursuant to the provisions of Act 161 of the 2004 Legislature.

We have made significant progress in implementing the various provisions of Act 161. In collaboration with the Vermont School Boards Association, the Departments of Agriculture and Health, we developed a sample policy that identifies the minimum federal requirements.

We also developed a companion document, the [*Vermont Nutrition and Fitness Policy Guidelines*](#), that outlines the best policy guidance available for nutrition and physical activity.

The table that follows describes the components of Act 161 and work that has been done to respond to the requirements.

| Act 161 Requirement | Status |
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| (b) The commissioner with the approval of the state board shall establish an advisory council on wellness which shall include at least three members associated with the health services field. | The pre-existing Comprehensive Health Education Advisory Council (CHEAC) expanded its mission and changed its name to the Comprehensive Health Education and Wellness Advisory Council (CHEWAC). Three of the members are associated with the health services field. |
| <p>(c) The commissioner shall collaborate with other agencies and councils working on childhood wellness to:</p> <p>(1) Supervise the preparation of appropriate nutrition and fitness curricula for use in the public schools.</p> <p>Promote programs for the preparation of teachers to teach these curricula.</p> | <p>The DOE, in collaboration with Vermont Institutes, prepared and distributed Physical Education and Health Education Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) documents to all schools over the past year. GLEs are based on specific standards in <i>Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities</i> and are used by teachers to develop and adopt curriculum. Teachers may also use the guidelines for nutrition and fitness curriculum found in the department's <i>Vermont Health Education Guidelines for Curriculum and Assessment</i>.</p> <p>The Safe & Healthy Schools Division and the Licensing Division have worked with the four institutions of higher education (UVM, Norwich University, Castleton State and Lyndon State College) offering programs leading to health education endorsement to ensure that teacher preparation coursework is aligned with the Vermont health educator competencies.</p> <p>The DOE, in collaboration with the University of Vermont and the Center for Health and Learning, sponsored an online course for health educators on health education and assessment.</p> <p>In collaboration with Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Rocky Mountain Training Center, the DOE held a two-day training session for health educators interested in learning how to use the Health Education Curriculum Assessment Tool to assess the comprehensiveness and efficacy of health education curriculum.</p> <p>In August 2005, the DOE sponsored a three-day Physical Education Institute which focused on physical education standards and assessment tools.</p> |

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| Assist in the development of wellness programs. | <p>The DOE, in collaboration with the Vermont Department of Health (VDH), is in the last year of a three-year project entitled the Coordinated School Health Leadership Institute. This institute provided professional development to a limited number of schools and supervisory unions to establish school health teams which will support school/community wellness activities.</p> <p>Team Nutrition grant funding provided technical assistance to other schools to improve upon the nutrition and physical activity practices of students.</p> <p>The VDH, DOE and Cabot Corporation produced a 12-minute DVD on the value of creating school health teams to support improved nutrition, physical activity and health education practices in schools. Copies will be provided to schools following regional or school-based training.</p> |
| (2) Prepare and continually update a list of school and community programs which have the potential to improve childhood wellness. The commissioner shall make the list available to all school districts and to any community groups that request it. | The Department of Education has provided information on in-state resources through the DOE/SHS electronic newsletter <i>Linking Health and Learning</i> . A list of 16 promising national programs was provided to all attendees at the Action for Healthy Kids conference in November 2005. |
| (3) Establish and maintain a website which displays data from a youth risk behavior survey in a way that enables the public to aggregate and disaggregate the information. | The DOE, in collaboration with the Vermont Data Consortium, is in the process of creating a data warehouse for use by the public and education community. Data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey has been entered into the warehouse. The public will have the ability to aggregate and disaggregate data. |
| (4) Research funding opportunities for schools and communities that wish to build wellness programs and make the information available to the public. | Every two weeks the DOE provides information about funding opportunities to schools that subscribe to our electronic newsletter <i>Linking Health and Learning</i> . |

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| <p>(5) Create a process for schools to share with the Department of Health any data collected about the height and weight of students in kindergarten through grade six. The commissioner of health may report any data compiled under this subdivision on a countywide basis.</p> <p>The model program shall include an annual report to parents which describes their child's performance on fitness and other wellness indicators.</p> | <p>The annual Health Services Screening Report allows nurses who collect height and weight data to report it to the DOE. The data is then shared with the Department of Health.</p> <p>The DOE sponsored a full-day training session for all physical education instructors interested in exploring the use of Fitnessgram® at the summer Physical Education Institute. Fitnessgram® provides a fitness and wellness report card for parents.</p> |
| <p>(d) The department shall offer assistance to school districts and supervisory unions to provide teacher instruction in wellness programs.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In August 2005, the DOE sponsored a three-day Physical Education Institute for physical education instructors. • In August 2005, the DOE sponsored a three-day Health Education Institute for health educators. • In August 2005, the DOE sponsored a week-long Nutrition Institute for food service personnel and school health teams. • In June 2005, the DOE and the VDH sponsored a three-day Coordinated School Health Leadership Institute. • In November 2005, the DOE, Action for Healthy Kids and Shelburne Farms sponsored a one-day conference on nutrition and fitness. |

| Act 161 Requirement | Status |
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| <p>(a) The commissioner of education shall collaborate with the secretary of human services and the secretary of agriculture, foods and markets to write a model school fitness and nutrition policy. The policy shall be available to school districts on or before January 1, 2005. The model policy shall include:</p> <p>(1) A definition of nutritious foods, nutritional guidelines, and, to the extent financially feasible, policies regarding purchasing of locally grown foods for food and beverages sold or served in the food service program, vending machines, snack bars, and school stores.</p> <p>(2) A model physical education curriculum which is a sequential, developmentally appropriate program that is an enjoyable experience for students and designed to help students develop the knowledge, skill, self-management skill, attitudes, and confidence needed to adopt and maintain physical fitness throughout their lives.</p> <p>(3) Model physical activity policies which include, in addition to regular physical education classes, minimum daily physical activity for each student provided through programs such as recess and other recreation periods, and participation in athletics either during or after regular school hours. In this subsection, “physical activity” means moderate and vigorous physical activities.</p> <p>(4) A process for implementing and enforcing nutrition and physical fitness policies.</p> <p>(5) A process for reporting to the community on the health status of students</p> | <p>The <i>Vermont Nutrition and Fitness Policy Guidelines</i> document has been signed by the Commissioner of Health, the Secretary of Agriculture and the Commissioner of Education. The guidelines are located on the DOE Web site. A link to the site has been provided to superintendents, principals and <i>Linking Health and Learning</i> subscribers.</p> <p>The DOE has been unable to fulfill this requirement as of yet. Once the new PE consultant is on board (start date – December 19th, 2005) a committee of physical education teachers will assist in the development of the model curriculum. The final product will be based on the <i>Vermont Health Education Guidelines for Curriculum and Assessment</i> currently available from the DOE.</p> |

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| <p>(b) The commissioner of education shall develop and implement a wellness grant program which awards funds to help school communities establish a wellness program pursuant to section 216 of Title 16.</p> | <p>The DOE awarded grants focused on wellness activities to 11 schools during the 2004-05 school year. A request for 2005-2006 proposals was sent to schools in November 2005. Proposals are due in early January 2006 and successful applicants will be awarded grants in late January 2006.</p> |
| <p>Sec. 4 POSITION CREATED One position - educational consultant II - is created in the Department of Education, safe and healthy schools division, for the purpose of implementing this act.</p> | <p>This position was created and an individual was hired in November 2004. This position was reopened in May 2005 and filled in December 2005.</p> |